KNIGHTFALL
3
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BATMAN
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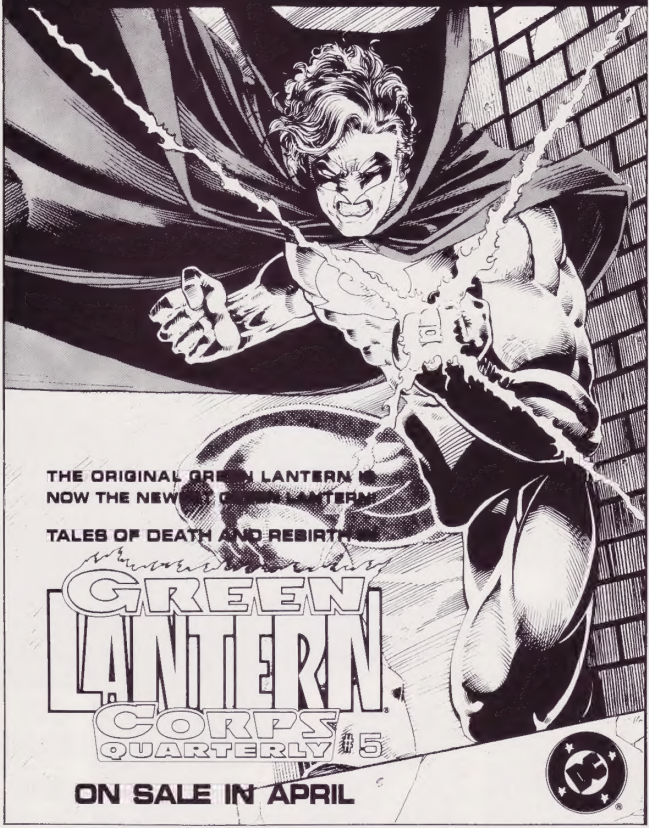
DOUG MOENCH
NORM BREYFOGLE

"AND I SHALL SHED MY LIGHT OVER DARK EVIL..."


THE ORIGINAL GREEN LANTERN IS
NOW THE NEW GREEN LANTERN
TALES OF DEATH AND REBIRTH...
GREEN LANTERN
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RACING FOR MY GRAVE, ALREADY DEAD.
BUT I CAN'T REST, NOT AFTER THE ARKHAM BREAKOUT -- THIRTY-ODD MURDERS ALREADY, AND ALL THE WORK OF MINOR MADMEN.
OF THE FOUR MAJOR ONES, TO MAKE A MOVIE, THE MAD HATTER AND AMYGDALA HAVE BEEN CAPTURED; THE VENTRILOQUIST IS STILL AT LARGE, AND THE FILM FREAK HIMSELF, HAS BEEN MURDERED.
IT'S BARELY BEGUN, BUT THE GRAVE IS RUSHING CLOSER, AND NOW...
:SKSS: ZSASZ, SERIAL KILLER RECENTLY ESCAPED FROM ARKHAM :SKSS: HOLED UP IN THE BATES SCHOOL FOR WOMEN :SKSS: HOSTAGES :SKSS: SEND TACTICAL SQUADS AT ONCE :SKSS:
NO REST, NOT FOR THE WICKED... NOR THOSE WHO DARE DEAL WITH THEM.

REDLASH

DOUG MOENCH - WRITER / NORM BREYFOGLE - ARTIST / ADRIENNE ROY - COLORIST / TIM HARKINS - LETTERER
JORDAN B. GORFINKEL - ASST. EDITOR / DENNIS O'NEIL - EDITOR / BATMAN CREATED BY BOB KANE

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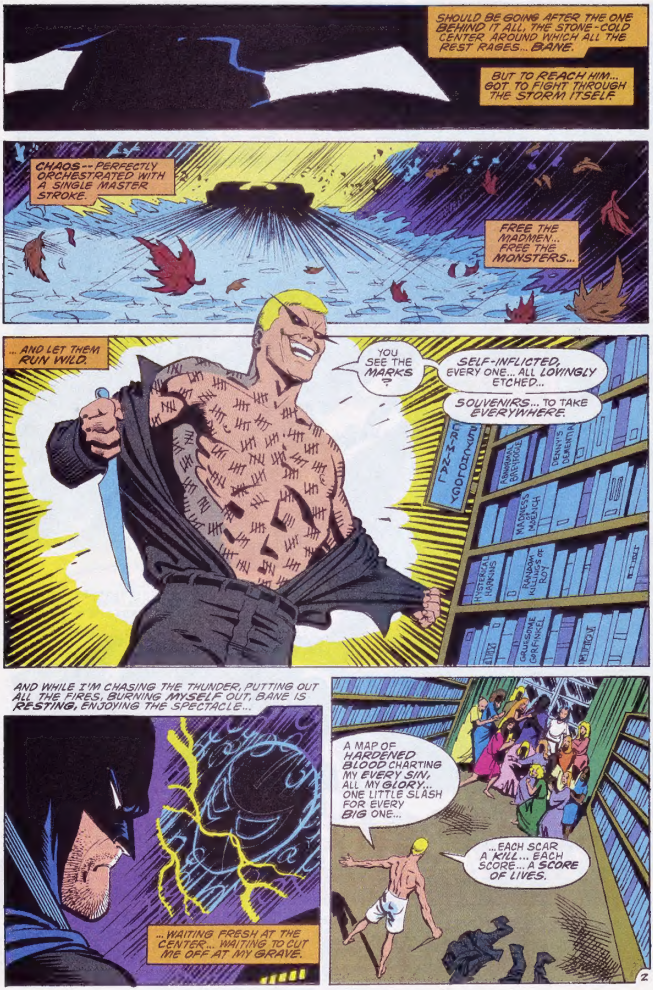
SHOULD BE GOING AFTER THE ONE BEHIND IT ALL, THE STONE-COLD CENTER AROUND WHICH ALL THE REST RAGES... BANE.
BUT TO REACH HIM... GOT TO FIGHT THROUGH THE STORM ITSELF
CHAOS -- PERFECTLY ORCHESTRATED WITH A SINGLE MASTER STROKE.
FREE THE MADMEN... FREE THE MONSTERS...
... AND LET THEM RUN WILD.
YOU SEE THE MARKS?
SELF-INFLICTED, EVERY ONE... ALL LOVINGLY ETCHED...
SOUVENIRS... TO TAKE EVERYWHERE.
AND WHILE I'M CHASING THE THUNDER, PUTTING OUT ALL THE FIRES, BURNING MYSELF OUT, BANE IS RESTING, ENJOYING THE SPECTACLE...
... WAITING FRESH AT THE CENTER... WAITING TO CUT ME OFF AT MY GRAVE.
A MAP OF HARDENED BLOOD CHARTING MY EVERY SIN, ALL MY GLORY... ONE LITTLE SLASH FOR EVERY BIG ONE...
... EACH SCAR A KILL... EACH SCORE... A SCORE OF LIVES.
2

LOOK AT YOU, TOO TERRIFIED TO SO MUCH AS WHIMPER... BUT DEEP INSIDE, WHERE ALL THE RED IS SO BARELY BOUND, I KNOW YOU'RE ASKING...
"HOW MANY OF US... WILL BECOME PART OF HIM?"
MAYBE ALL OF YOU, MAYBE ONLY SOME...
...BUT SURELY AT LEAST, SAY... THREE OF YOU.
ONE THING IS CERTAIN...
I INTEND TO SAVOR THIS NIGHT IN PEACE, AND THE SUREST WAY TO GET UNDER AND INTO MY SKIN... IS BY MAKING A FUSS.
KLATCH
KLITCH
LOCKED US IN... GONNA DIE...
A FUSS--? WE SHOULD HAVE JUMPED HIM-- RIPPED HIS EYES OUT.
EASY TO SAY NOW... NOW THAT HE'S GONE.
SOMEBODY GO AROUND FRONT AND FIND KITCH-- TELL HIM THIS LOOKS LIKE THE LAST OF 'EM FOR NOW!

LIEUTENANT KITCH-- MOST OF THE WOMEN GOT OUT THE BACK-- BEING TAKEN TO HOSPITALS FOR TRAUMA COUNSELING...
BATES
HOSPITAL FOR WOMEN
MOST--?
STILL SOME FIFTEEN RESIDENT STUDENTS UNACCOUNTED FOR, SIR--AND ONE OF THE ESCAPED WOMEN CLAIMS SHE BROKE FREE OF A GROUP ZSASZ WAS HERDING INTO THE LIBRARY.
HER CONDITION?
PRETTY HYSTERICAL BUT CONVINCING--AND IT MAKES SENSE...
IF THOSE FIFTEEN AREN'T STASHED IN THE LIBRARY--OR AT LEAST SCATTERED IN DIFFERENT PLACES IN THERE--THEN THEY'RE PROBABLY DEAD.
WE NEVER ASSUME THAT, OFFICER.
THEN... HE'S STILL GOT FIFTEEN HOSTAGES, SIR.
FIFTEEN OR FIVE-HUNDRED--THE SITUATION REMAINS THE SAME.
HOW LONG SINCE AXTON WENT IN THERE?
GOING ON TWENTY MINUTES.
TOO LONG.
WANT ME TO TRY TO RAISE HIM, SIR?
I TOLD YOU--THE NOISE MIGHT GIVE HIM AWAY... AND I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE THE ENTIRE FORCE ISN'T EQUIPPED WITH EARPHONES FOR THOSE THINGS.
I'VE GOT ONE...
4

CHOMP!
HEY! IT'S A DINOSAUR!
INTRODUCING
ROCKY D.™
DINOSAUR EXTRAORDINAIRE!
WRONG, BRONTASAURUS BREATH! I'M NOT JUST A DINOSAUR... I'M ROCKY D., DINOSAUR EXTRAORDINAIRE!
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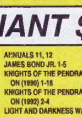

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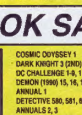

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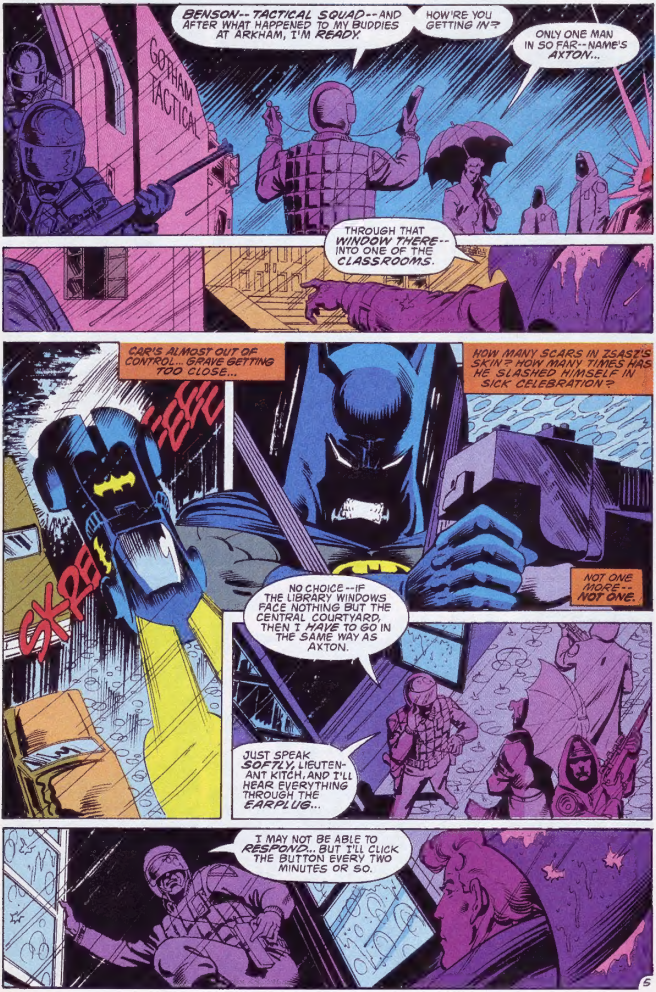
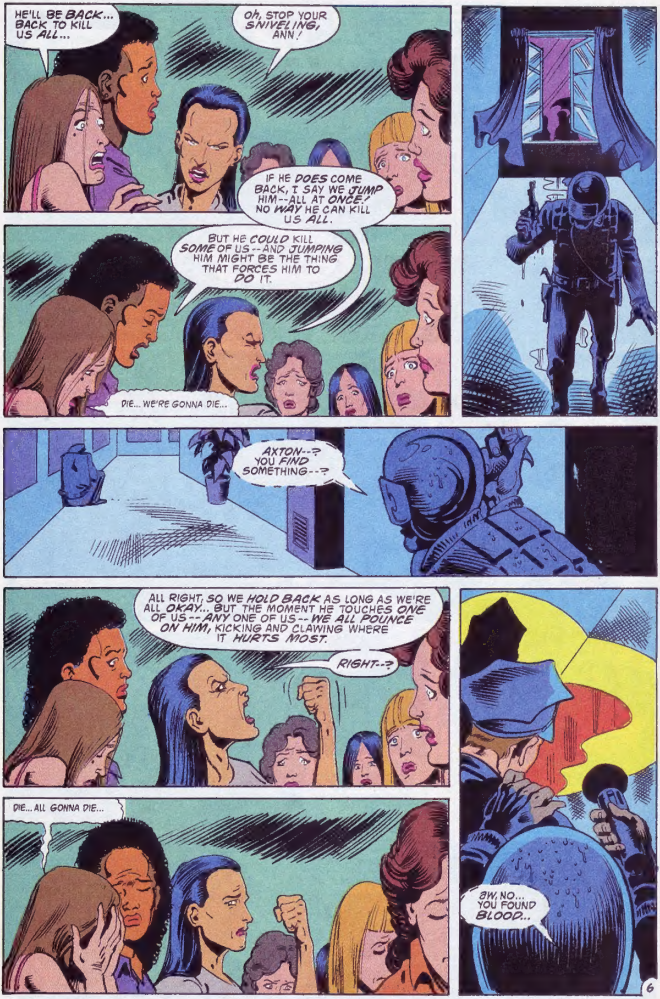

BENSON--TACTICAL SQUAD--AND AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO MY BUDDIES AT ARKHAM, I'M READY.
HOW'RE YOU GETTING IN?
ONLY ONE MAN IN SO FAR--NAME'S AXTON...
GOTHAM TACTICAL
THROUGH THAT WINDOW THERE--INTO ONE OF THE CLASSROOMS.
CAR'S ALMOST OUT OF CONTROL... GRAVE GETTING TOO CLOSE...
HOW MANY SCARS IN ZSASZ'S SKIN? HOW MANY TIMES HAS HE SLASHED HIMSELF IN SICK CELEBRATION?
NOT ONE MORE--NOT ONE.
NO CHOICE--IF THE LIBRARY WINDOWS FACE NOTHING BUT THE CENTRAL COURTYARD, THEN I HAVE TO GO IN THE SAME WAY AS AXTON.
JUST SPEAK SOFTLY, LIEUTENANT KITCH, AND I'LL HEAR EVERYTHING THROUGH THE EARPLUG...
I MAY NOT BE able TO RESPOND... BUT I'LL CLICK THE BUTTON EVERY TWO MINUTES OR SO.


HE'LL BE BACK... BACK TO KILL US ALL...
OH, STOP YOUR SNIVELING, ANN!
IF HE DOES COME BACK, I SAY WE JUMP HIM--ALL AT ONCE! NO WAY HE CAN KILL US ALL.
BUT HE COULD KILL SOME OF US--AND JUMPING HIM MIGHT BE THE THING THAT FORCES HIM TO DO IT.
DIE... WE'RE GONNA DIE...
AXTON--? YOU FIND SOMETHING--?
ALL RIGHT, SO WE HOLD BACK. AS LONG AS WE'RE ALL OKAY... BUT THE MOMENT HE TOUCHES ONE OF US--ANY ONE OF US--WE ALL POUNCE ON HIM, KICKING AND CLAWING WHERE IT HURTS MOST.
RIGHT--?
DIE... ALL GONNA DIE...
BW, NO... YOU FOUND BLOOD...
6

SHHHHH-S MY GOD--AXTON!
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?! EVEN IF ONE OR TWO GO DOWN FIGHTING, THAT'S BETTER THAN ALL OF US GOING DOWN ONE BY ONE LIKE STUPID COWS OR SHEEP!
RIGHT?!
GOTHAM POLICE
R-RIGHT.. BUT ONLY IF THERE'S NO OTHER WAY...
SHREKKK
"...ONLY IF HE'S REALLY ABOUT TO USE THAT KNIFE!"
YESSS.

--TENSE STANDOFF CONTINUES AT GOTHAM'S BATES SCHOOL FOR WOMEN, WHERE POLICE ARE UNABLE TO MOVE WITHOUT RISK TO HOSTAGES' LIVES...
LOTTA COPS, BANE-- BUT NO BATMAN YET.
IN OTHER NEWS...
HE'LL BE THERE, BIRD.
BATE'S S FOR WO
I THINK MAYBE THE BATMAN S RIPE FOR HIS FALL RIGHT NOW.
NO. HE'S PHYSICALLY WEAKENED -- AND DEPLETED MORE WITH EACH NEW EXPLOSION OF MADNESS -- BUT HIS MIND IS STILL STRONG...
PROBABLY -- BUT I M BEGINNIN' TO WONDER ABOUT HIM, BANE -- ESPECIALLY AFTER RUNNIN' INTO HIS LITTLE PARTNER.
THE KID'S GOOD, BUT ANY MAN WHO RELIES ON A KID MAY BE OVERRATED...
HE IS NOT READY TO BE BROKEN . NOT QUITE YET.
KRIK
WHEN HE IS, I WILL KNOW IT. AND THEN, THE PIECES WILL STAY BROKEN.

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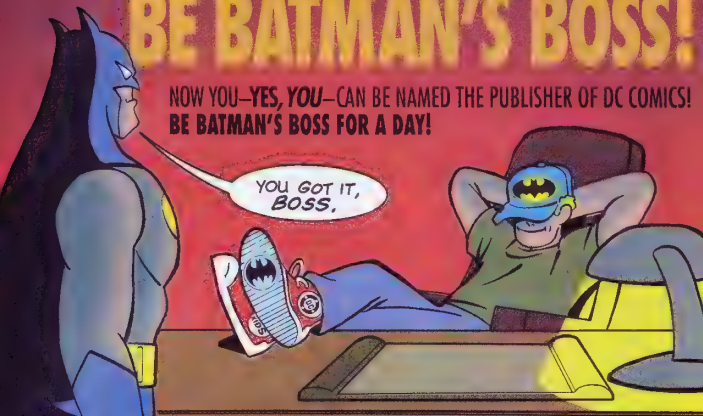

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BATMAN. The Animated Series

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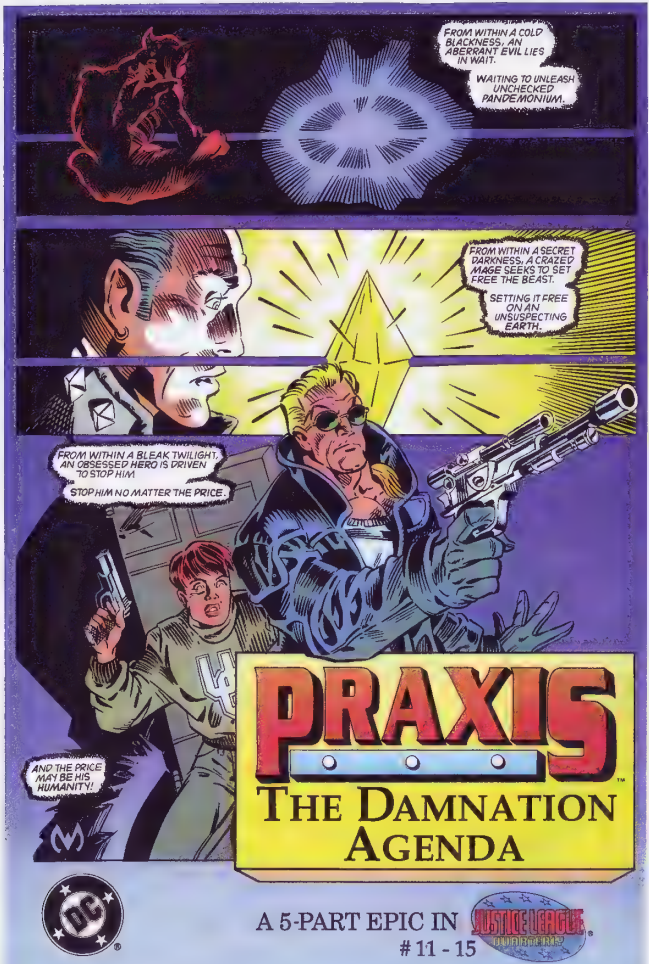
FROM WITHIN A COLD BLACKNESS, AN ABERRANT EVIL LIES IN WAIT.
WAITING TO UNLEASH UNCHECKED PANDEMONIUM.
FROM WITHIN A SECRET DARKNESS, A CRAZED MAGE SEEKS TO SET FREE THE BEAST.
SETTING IT FREE ON AN UNSUSPECTING EARTH.
FROM WITHIN A BLEAK TWILIGHT, AN OBSESSED HERO IS DRIVEN TO STOP HIM.
STOP HIM NO MATTER THE PRICE.
AND THE PRICE MAY BE HIS HUMANITY!
PRAXIS
THE DAMNATION AGENDA
A 5-PART EPIC IN
JUSTICE LEAGUE
11 - 15

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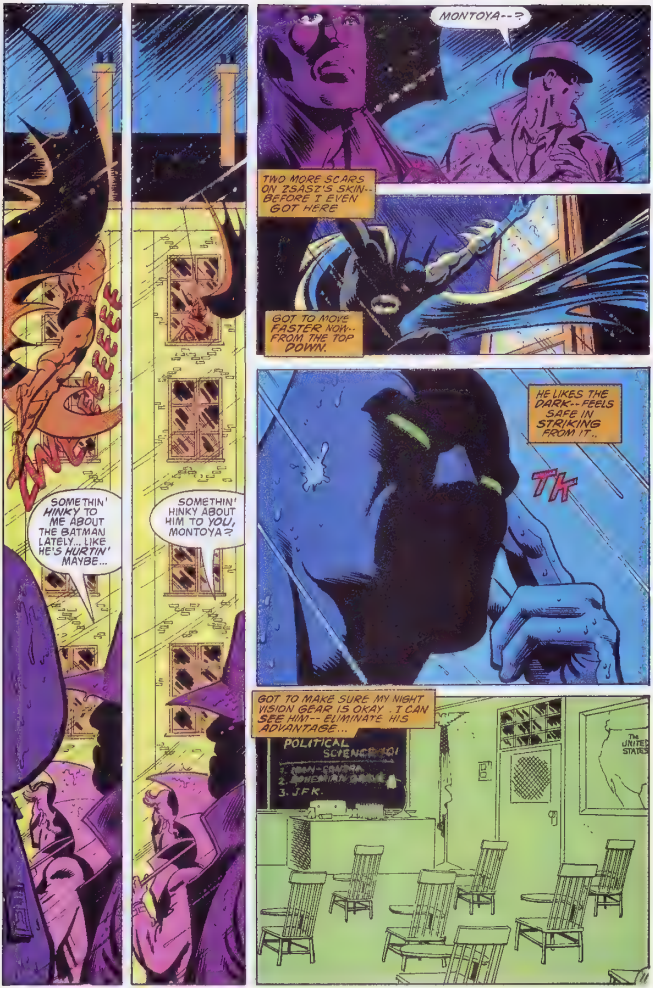
BULLOCK AN' MONTOYA--MAJOR CRIMES. COMMISSIONER GORDON'S BEEN CALLED TO THE MAYOR'S MANSION--SENT US AS HIS REPS.
WHO'S IN CHARGE?
RIGHT OVER THERE--LIEUTENANT KITCH FROM HOMICIDE.
SITUATION, KITCH?
HE WON'T EVEN LISTEN TO HOSTAGE NEGOTIATORS--THREATENED TO START SLITTING THROATS IF WE MADE ANY MOVES.
uh-huh...SO WHAT MOVES HAVE YOU MADE?
HELLO OUT THERE...
BENSON--?
I'M AFRAID DEAR BENSON IS...DISCONNECTED AT THE MOMENT...AND THAT'S TWO.
WHA-BAM
YOU'VE IGNORED MY WARNINGS--TWICE NOW--AND YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS!
TWO OF THE ZOMBIES--TWO OF THE PRETTY GIRLS--WILL HAVE TO PAY FOR YOUR TRANSGRESSIONS!
WHAT THE--? AXTON! AND BENSON!

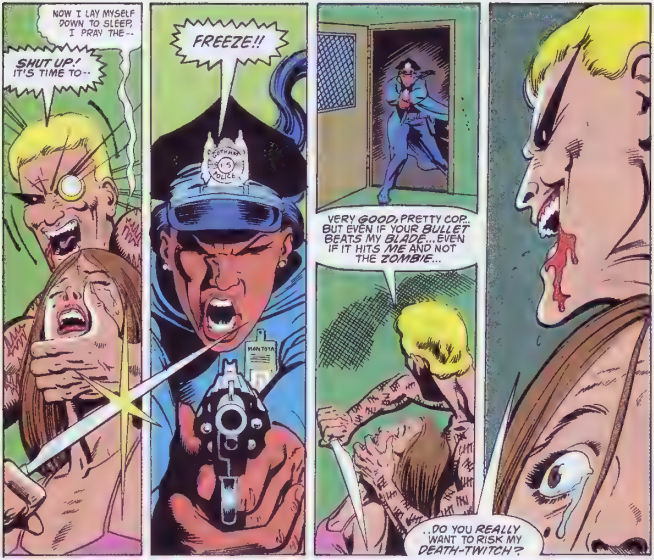
BRAMBRAMBRAM
KEESSH
BRRRT
HAHAHAHA!!
GISH
PEESH
HOLD YOUR FIRE!!
BAMP
WE DON'T KNOW WHO MIGHT BE IN THERE-- CAN'T RISK BULLETS FLYING AROUND!
YOU GONNA SEND SOMEONE ELSE IN, KITCH?
GOT TO DO SOMETHING... BUT WE CAN'T JUST RUSH THE PLACE OR HE'LL--
NO MORE MOVES...
I'M GOING IN.
PSHAK
10

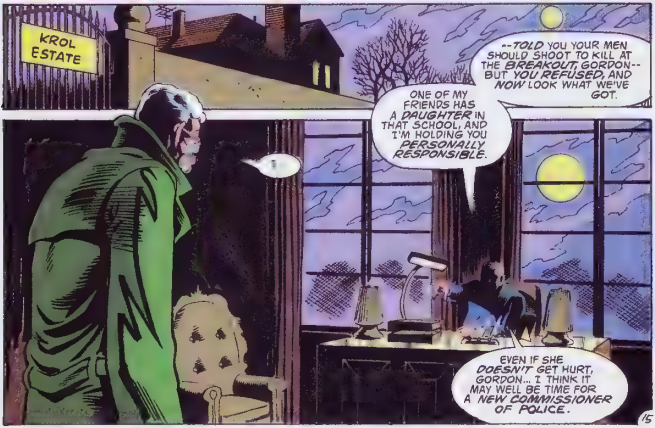

MONTOYA--?
TWO MORE SCARS ON ZSASZ'S SKIN-- BEFORE I EVEN GOT HERE
GOT TO MOVE FASTER NOW-- FROM THE TOP DOWN.
HE LIKES THE DARK-- FEELS SAFE IN STRIKING FROM IT...
TK
GOT TO MAKE SURE MY NIGHT VISION GEAR IS OKAY. I CAN SEE HIM-- ELIMINATE HIS ADVANTAGE...
POLITICAL SCIENCE 101
1. IRAN-CONTRA
2.
3. JFK
The UNITED STATES
SOMETHIN' HINKY TO ME ABOUT THE BATMAN LATELY... LIKE HE'S HURTIN' MAYBE...
SOMETHIN' HINKY ABOUT HIM TO YOU, MONTOYA?

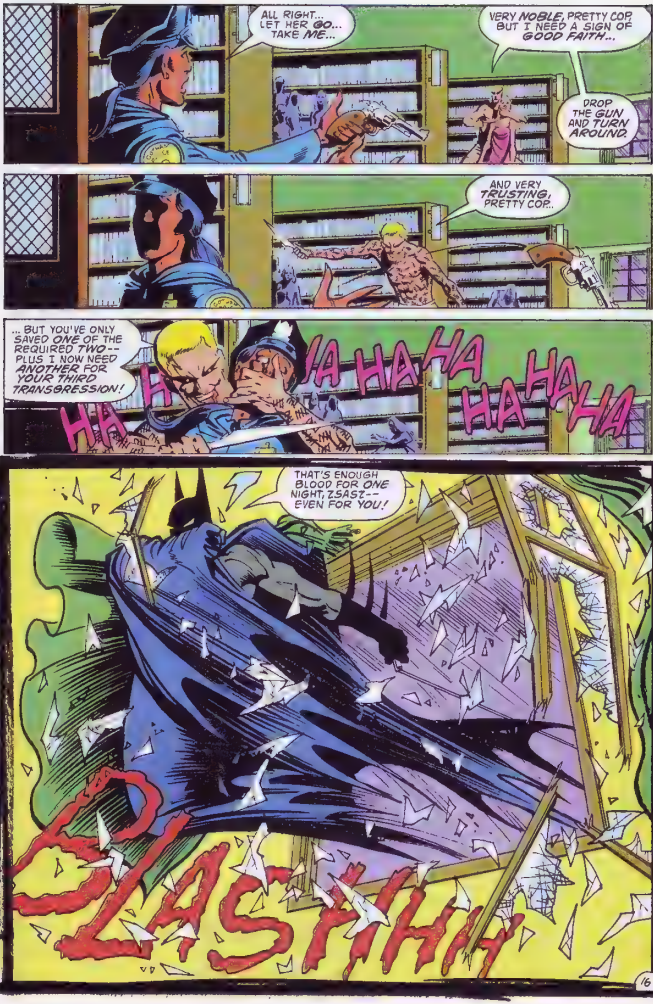
NOTHING IN THE CORRIDOR... BUT HE WAS JUST UP HERE-- HURLED THE BODIES FROM--
SLAM
IN THERE--I'S AST MUST HAVE HEARD OR SEEN ME-- DUCKED INTO THIS OTHER CLASSROOM.
... WAITING 'N AMBUSH... READY TO STRIKE WITHOUT WARNING...
BUT--I GO A FAST, BEFORE HE CAN--

IT'S... YOU?!
NOT THAT WE'VE BEEN BEST AMIGOS LATELY...? KOFF--...BUT I DIDN'T EXPECT US TO GO AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS LIKE--
NO TIME FOR THIS-- AND I WANT YOU TO LEAVE. NOW.
HEY, AT LEAST LET ME TELL YOU THE NEWS I--
WE'D ONLY GET IN EACH OTHER'S WAY IN THE DARK-- AND ISAAZ IS A KILLER.
LIKE BANE'S NOT?
YOU SAW BANE?
NO... BUT I DID MEET ONE OF HIS FAITHFUL STOOGES ON--
HOW DO YOU KNOW?
HE MATCHED YOUR DESCRIPTION OF ONE OF THOSE THREE JAMOKES WHO BLASTED THE RIDDLER, OKAY?-- THE BIRD-GUY WITH HIS ATTACK-FALCON.
AND IF YOU DON'T WANT ME HERE, HOW 'BOUT I TRY TO FIND AND FOLLOW HIM?
JUST DON'T CONFRONT BANE.
LIKE THAT'S ON MY WISH LIST.
BIRD TO BANE-- BATMAN WENT IN ABOUT THREE MINUTES AGO. BUT IT'S STILL QUIET.
KEEP WATCHING.
BINGO.

UNFORTUNATELY FOR CERTAIN ZOMBIES IN THIS ROOM, THE PROTECTORS OF SOCIETY HAVE MADE TWO VERY WRONG MOVES...
DIE G-GOING TO... D-DIE...
...AND EVEN THOUGH I MUST ADMIT TO ENJOYING BOTH OF THEM IMMENSELY...
...PROMISES ARE PROMISES.
D-DIE.
NOW!!
UFFF..!
CHUDT
AND SHE WILL DO QUITE NICELY FOR NUMBER TWO.


NOW I LAY MYSELF DOWN TO SLEEP, I PRAY THE--
SHUT UP! IT'S TIME TO--
FREEZE!!
GOTHAM POLICE
MAIN TOY'A
VERY GOOD, PRETTY COP. BUT EVEN IF YOUR BULLET BEATS MY BLADE... EVEN IF IT HITS ME AND NOT THE ZOMBIE...
..DO YOU REALLY WANT TO RISK MY DEATH-TWITCH?


KROL ESTATE
--TOLD YOU YOUR MEN SHOULD SHOOT TO KILL AT THE BREAKOUT, GORDON-- BUT YOU REFUSED, AND NOW LOOK WHAT WE'VE GOT.
ONE OF MY FRIENDS HAS A DAUGHTER IN THAT SCHOOL, AND I'M HOLDING YOU PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE.
EVEN IF SHE DOESN'T GET HURT, GORDON... I THINK IT MAY WELL BE TIME FOR A NEW COMMISSIONER OF POLICE.


ALL RIGHT... LET HER GO... TAKE ME...
VERY NOBLE, PRETTY COP BUT I NEED A SIGN OF GOOD FAITH..
DROP THE GUN AND TURN AROUND.
AND VERY TRUSTING, PRETTY COP..
...BUT YOU'VE ONLY SAVED ONE OF THE REQUIRED TWO-- PLUS I NOW NEED ANOTHER FOR YOUR THIRD TRANSGRESSION!
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
THAT'S ENOUGH BLOOD FOR ONE NIGHT, ZSAST-- EVEN FOR YOU!
SLASH!!
16

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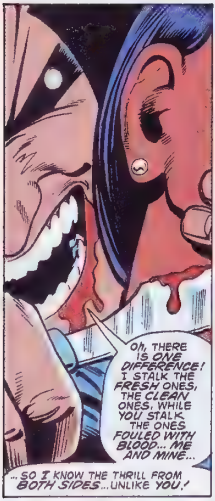
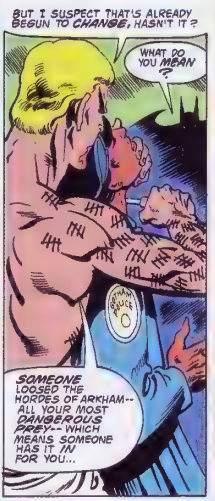
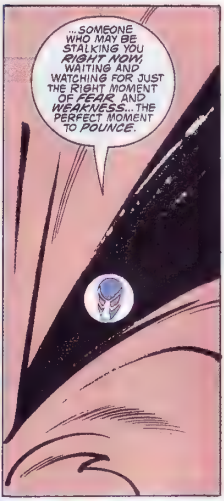
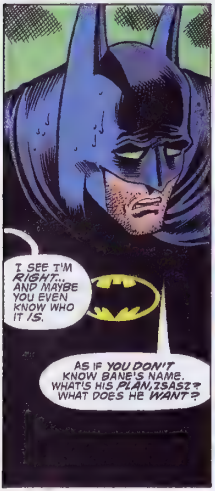
I'M BETWEEN HIM AND THE HOSTAGES, BUT HE'S PIVOTING WITH MY EVERY MOVE, KEEPING MONTOYA BETWEEN US
DON'T BARGAIN WITH HIM -- I JUST TRIED IT!
Bh, BUT HE'S NOT A COP.. HE'S JUST LIKE ME -- A STALKER IN THE DARK... A FIGURE OF FEAR... A PREDATOR...
I DON'T KILL, ISASZ.
AND YOU LOVE IT, DON'T YOU? -- ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU BRING YOUR PREY DOWN...
Bh YES, YOUR "SAVING GRACE" -- THE ONE FACTOR THAT ALLOWS THE ZOMBIES TO SANCTION YOUR ACTIONS...
...THAT AND YOUR CHOICE OF VICTIMS, OF COURSE... BUT YOU'D LIKE TO KILL THEM, IF ONLY THEY'D LET YOU GET AWAY WITH IT...
...BECAUSE IT WOULD MAKE YOUR WORK SO MUCH EASIER, WOULDN'T IT?. AND EVER SO MUCH MORE SATISFYING.
YOU'RE WRONG.
AND YOU'RE DENYING! WE ARE THE SAME! WE BOTH LIKE TO COME UP ON THEM IN THE DARK, FEELING THE FORBIDDEN POWER OF IT, SEEING THE FEAR SLASHED IN THEIR FACES... WE CRAVE IT..
JUST TAKE HIM -- DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME!
TWO COPS ALREADY DOWN BECAUSE I WAS TOO SLOW. BECAUSE I'VE LOST A STEP. AND NOW... I'M NOT NEARLY FAST ENOUGH TO REACH HIM BEFORE MONTOYA GOES DOWN...
WE'RE... NOT... THE SAME.


Oh, THERE IS ONE DIFFERENCE! I STALK THE FRESH ONES, THE CLEAN ONES. WHILE YOU STALK THE ONES FOULED WITH BLOOD... ME AND MINE...
...SO I KNOW THE THRILL FROM BOTH SIDES...UNLIKE YOU!

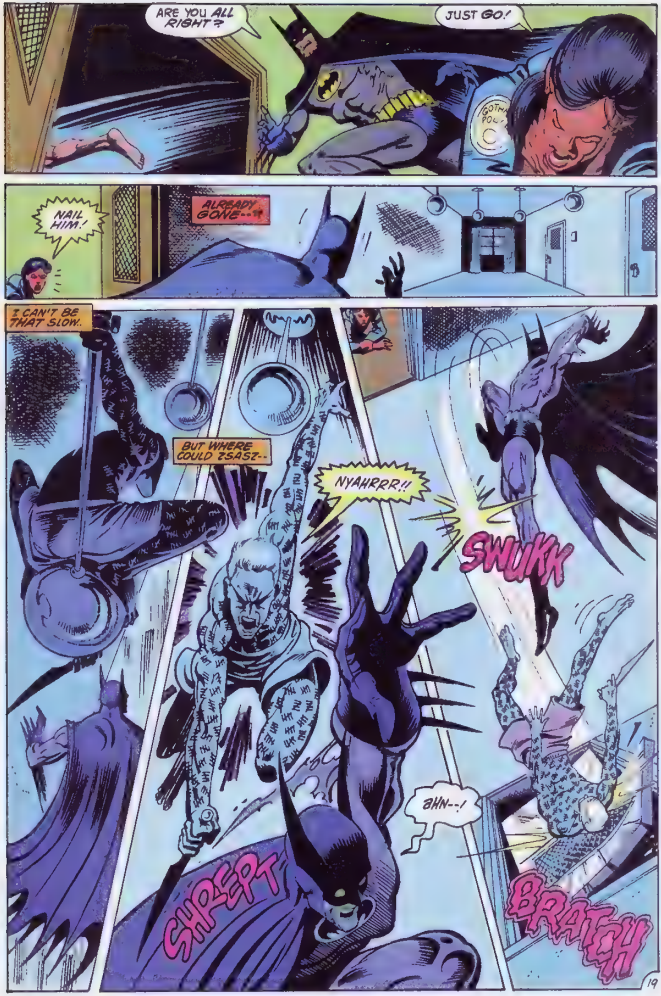

BUT I SUSPECT THAT'S ALREADY BEGUN TO CHANGE, HASN'T IT?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
SOMEONE LOOSED THE HORDES OF ARKHAM--ALL YOUR MOST DANGEROUS PREY--WHICH MEANS SOMEONE HAS IT IN FOR YOU...


...SOMEONE WHO MAY BE STALKING YOU RIGHT NOW, WAITING AND WATCHING FOR JUST THE RIGHT MOMENT OF FEAR AND WEAKNESS...THE PERFECT MOMENT TO POUNCE.


I SEE I'M RIGHT... AND MAYBE YOU EVEN KNOW WHO IT IS.
AS IF YOU DON'T KNOW BANE'S NAME. WHAT'S HIS PLAN, ZSASZ? WHAT DOES HE WANT?

YOU ARE JUST LIKE ME... PARANOID... BUT IT'S THRILLING, ISN'T IT? --TO BE BOTH HUNTER AND HUNTED, KNOWING DEEP INSIDE YOU DESERVE TO BE BROUGHT DOWN...
...DOOMED TO BRING DOOM... AND DOOMED TO PAY FOR IT.

KUNK
TUD
TAKE HIM!
CHUP


ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
JUST GO!
BOTH...
NAH, HIM!
ALREADY GONE--?!
I CAN'T BE THAT SLOW.
BUT WHERE COULD ZSASZ--
NYAHRRR!!
SWUKK
SHREPT
BHN--!
BRATCH
19

HIS KNIFE--NEVER REACH HIM IN TIME..
SWFFFFFF
JUST LIKE ME--DOOMED!
YOU'RE WRONG, ZSASZ..
TCHOK
SWUMP
TUD

Batman is reeling and exhausted. His encounter with Zsasz has left the Dark Knight mentally and physically drained.
Far below Gotham's streets, Robin is blindfolded and trapped between an enraged Killer Croc And Bane.
KNIGHTFALL
DETECTIVE COMICS 660
by Dixon, Balent and Nanna

KNIGHTFALL unfolds in BATMAN 492-500 • DETECTIVE COMICS 659-666 • SHOWCASE '93 7-8 • SHADOW OF THE BAT 16-18

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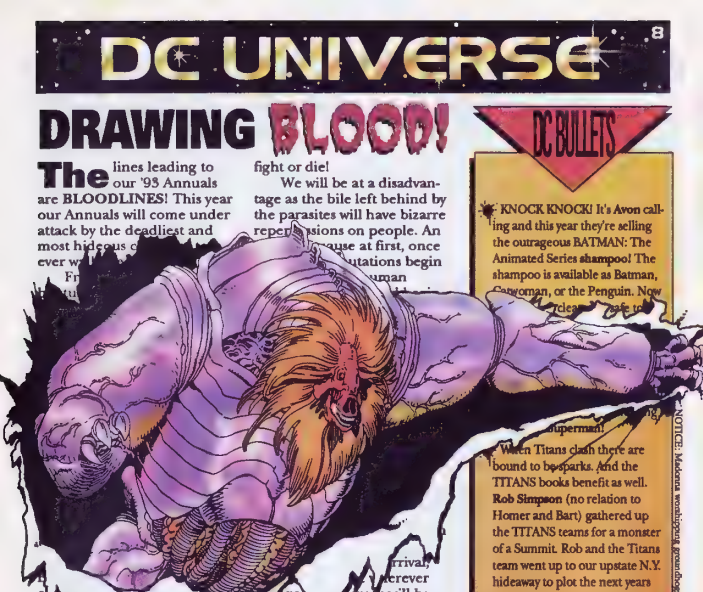
DRAWING BLOOD!

The lines leading to our '93 Annuals are **BLOODLINES!** This year our Annuals will come under attack by the deadliest and most hideous c… ever w…

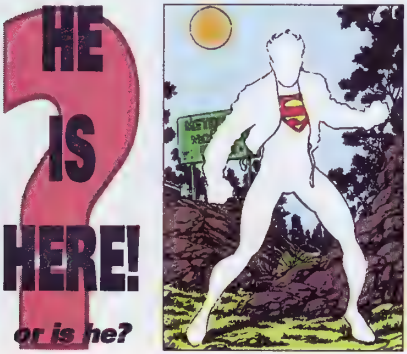
Fr… …

fight or die!

We will be at a disadvantage as the bile left behind by the parasites will have bizarre reper…sions on people. An… …ause at first, once …utations begin …uman …



…rrival, …erever …go. …eroes will be …up to the…r eyeballs in trouble as the alien parasites mount their attack on the Earth! So prepare yourself for the battle of the century!



Parasite by Art Adams, Superman (?) by Grummett and Hazlewood

DC BULLETS

KNOCK KNOCK! It's Avon calling and this year they're selling the outrageous BATMAN: The Animated Series **shampoo!** The shampoo is available as Batman, Catwoman, or the Penguin. Now …cles… …t…

…uperman! …

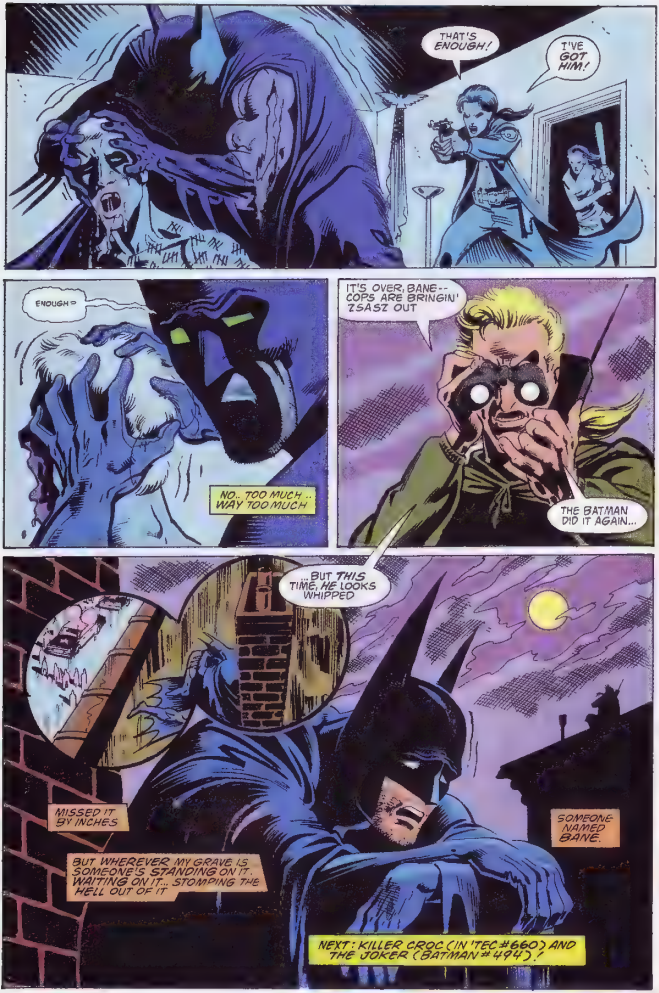
When Titans clash there are bound to be sparks. And the TITANS books benefit as well. **Rob Simpson** (no relation to Homer and Bart) gathered up the TITANS teams for a monster of a Summit. Rob and the Titans team went up to our upstate N.Y. hideaway to plot the next years worth of TITAN troubles. Among the co-conspiritors were **Phil Jimenez, Marv Wolfman, Al Vey,** and **Len Wein.** The highlight of the summit was when Phil began to recite the **Shannon Doherty** interview from *US* magazine —as Shannon!

A few weeks ago, our editor emeritus **Julie Schwartz** celebrated his 50th anniversary in comics! Even cooler, part of Julie's memoirs will be featured in the first issue of *Amazing Stories* magazine. Be sure to pick that up if you want to learn a thing or two about comics. Hey, Julie managed to outlive the Big Blue and now holds the title of LIVING Legend!

DARKSTARS and STAR TREK writer **Michael Jan Friedman** was ~~suckered~~ elected to be the commissioner for the office Baseball Rotissery League. Mike will also be a special guest on QVC's comic book segment.

NOTICE: Madonna worshipping groundhogs are flipping FLASH emblem upside-down. This makes them instantly collectible. Hoard my copies you can!

SWOK
WRONG!
KRA-KATCH
RUUUAAHHH
I'M RIGHT... AND YOU KNOW IT...
I'M ALREADY UNDER YOUR SKIN...
FINISH IT... KILL ME
NO--!!
THRO KK
SHUT UP!!
THROKK
I'M NOT LIKE YOU, HEAR ME, KILLER?! I'M NOT LIKE--
ALL RIGHT! STOP IT!!
KLING!


THAT'S ENOUGH!
I'VE GOT HIM!
ENOUGH?
NO.. TOO MUCH .. WAY TOO MUCH
IT'S OVER, BANE-- COPS ARE BRINGIN' 'ZSASZ OUT
THE BATMAN DID IT AGAIN...
...BUT THIS TIME, HE LOOKS WHIPPED
MISSED IT BY INCHES
BUT WHEREVER MY GRAVE IS, SOMEONE'S STANDING ON IT, WAITING ON IT... STOMPING THE HELL OUT OF IT
SOMEONE NAMED BANE.
NEXT: KILLER CROC (IN 'TEC #660) AND THE JOKER ('BATMAN #494)!

DC COMICS
1325 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10019

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Never before in my many years of reading—and now, writing—comic-book letter columns have I ever witnessed so profound a response to one story than I have for BATMAN: SEDUCTION OF THE GUN. Readers were alternately touched and outraged, saddened and angered by John Ostrander's and Vince Giarrano's story of guns and school children. I surmise that the majority of these readers had never before reacted in writing to a comic-book story—and certainly never expected to see their words in print—facts that no doubt contributed to the sharpness of their responses and the power of their words.

I feel woefully underqualified to respond to any of the following letters. Instead, I ask you readers to respond for me. And if the situation warrants it, I will devote a future letter column to the responses.

And now, your letters about SEDUCTION OF THE GUN:

Dear Editor,

Two weeks ago a woman I work with lost her brother to a gunman's bullet. A promising man of 21 was lost to the culture of easy violence. Isn't it sad that it takes something close to home to get our attention and strip away our sense of insulation?

I am immensely grateful to see BATMAN: SEDUCTION OF THE GUN. It is high time that comics made an unequivocal statement that such violence is not fantasy and not a game. In the long run, it destroys more than just the individuals killed and their families.

Your story is one of the best expositions I have seen on the evil that has so much of the country in its grip. Frank, clear-headed, unpleasant and uncompromising, the script never wavered. The art was riveting, leaving no doubt as to the horror and finality of all that happened to the characters. I saw no heroism, only misery and fear and shock.

So, what will you do next? How can DC Comics (or any other comic-book company) send out more coherent, consistent messages about the value of life and the corrosive effects of violence and hatred on those who practice them?

Give my sympathy to John Reisenbach's family.

David Harrop
Arlington, VA

Dear DC,

Two days ago, on the day I bought BATMAN: SEDUCTION OF THE GUN, my 13-year-old son was shot in the face while walking to his school bus.

Supposedly, my son, Tom, owed the boy who shot him five dollars from over a year ago. Tom was shot because he hadn't paid. Both boys tell pretty much the same story, so there doesn't seem to be any question about motive. Good reason, huh?

Luckily for Tom, the gun used was a pellet gun. The pellet hit just below the jaw and is lodged in the soft tissues between the jaw bones. It will remain there for the rest of Tom's life. Tom is fine and already back in school with a small bandage on his chin being the only outward evidence of the incident.

The other boy was arrested and charged with a criminal act. He was also expelled from school for at least the rest of the school year. Which boy got off the easiest? And whose family will be agonizing over this event the longest?

Obviously, reading BATMAN: SEDUCTION OF THE GUN was an emotional experience for me. I wholly support your decision to graphically portray the results of shootings along with the senselessness of some of the deaths. I was appalled by some of the scenes, but I expect that this is exactly the effect you wanted to achieve. If this book can help prevent other kids from playing with guns, it'll have accomplished its purpose.

The depiction of Bruce Wayne/Batman in this issue was the best I've seen in a long time. I'm getting tired of the dark, gritty and psychopathic Batman. In this comic, however, Batman—still agonizing over his parents' death, an event handled more graphically here than ever before—snaps out of his psychosis and, with a slight smile on his face, says, "Let's get on with business." This is the Batman I want to see more of—one who can still smile and joke once in a while, even while engaged in deadly serious business. Bruce's comment that Joe Chill wouldn't have been able to kill his parents without a gun helped me to crystallize some of my own feelings about what has happened to me.

On a separate issue, I've noticed that DC has begun to print public service pages in the last few months. As a steady Batman and DC Comics reader since the late '50s, I'm very happy to see their return. I never thought about it until recently, but those pages I read back then probably helped create the person I am now. Keep it up!

All in all, BATMAN: SEDUCTION OF THE GUN was a good story that accomplished its objectives, at least with me. Now, if it will just have the same effect on the kids...

Bill Wormstedt
Kirkland, WA

Dear Editor,

As an avid reader and collector of Batman titles, I recently purchased the 64-page special BATMAN: SEDUCTION OF THE GUN. Upon finishing the story, I turned to the final page and discovered that I had just unknowingly made a contribution to a gun-control organization, one I have no interest in supporting.

I am absolutely furious. I am one of those "fat white bastards" who very actively opposes gun-control. Before this special issue came out, I had read that it was going to be a non-biased exploration of the role of guns in our society. I am not angry that the comic has a decidedly anti-gun tilt because I cherish the First Amendment to the Constitution as much as I cherish the Second. Rather, I am upset because I almost feel as though I have been tricked into supporting an organization whose goals I oppose. I think it very important that in the future you explain on the cover of your books that my purchase will involve a contribution to some cause.

I understand how the murder of John Reisenbach would motivate you to try to combat such senseless violence through the vehicle of the Batman comic books; however, I strongly disagree with you that gun control is the answer. I am very much concerned with the necessity to educate people about guns, gun safety, and the various ways guns affect society. But, as I said, the point of this letter is to convince you to be "up-front" about where the money from the purchase of your books might go. Heck, I might have bought the book anyway. Please avoid this sort of situation in the future. Thank you for considering my complaint.

Debbie Bauerle
Indianapolis, IN

Dear Editor,

Thank you for your efforts which made BATMAN: SEDUCTION OF THE GUN possible. It was very gritty and truthful in its depiction of the prevalence of guns in the hands of our youth.

Though it's been nearly twenty years since I was in high school, even then our inner city schools were a battle-

ground where guns and knives were used to settle a score. It's sad that the signs were there back then, but we ignored them, and our children are suffering because of it. As long as guns are glorified in movies and literature, human life will continue to be cheapened and "blowing away" someone will continue to be the way to settle arguments, regardless of how trivial.

Guns may have a place in our society, but I don't believe that that place is in the hands of our children, nor do I believe that guns should be easier to obtain than decent housing and medical care.

My son idolizes Batman. He watches the TV show and collects some of the comics, as do I. When he plays "Batman," I remind him that Batman doesn't kill—ever. Batman is a decent, helpful person who fights only to save others in danger or to save himself. He has learned that wearing the cape—I had to make him one to save wear and tear on my good towels and pillow cases—is an honor and something to be earned. If my son becomes too rough while playing and begins hurting others, or if he mentions the word "kill," he loses the right to wear the cape.

Because my son is developmentally disabled and has not yet mastered reading, I read the comics to him and we discuss what has happened, page by page. When I read SEDUCTION to him, he was deeply upset by the kids' violence and wanted to know why anyone would kill another person, and then steal their shoes, just because they beat them at a game of basketball.

He was saddened that someone would kill a person who they didn't even know just because someone else told them to. I explained that, unfortunately, it happens all the time. His only answer to that was a very solemn, "It has to stop, Mommy. People have to stop killing." And I agree.

Again, thank you for working to bring this subject and story into being. I hope that many of the kids who read this are moved enough to want to break the cycle of violence and realize just how dangerous guns really are.

A longtime Bat-reader,
Rosie Geonnotti
Maricopa, AZ

Dear Sirs,

Upon a visit to my local newsstand, I was intrigued by the cover of a prominently displayed comic book, BATMAN: SEDUCTION OF THE GUN. I bought the book and was appalled when I read it!

How can you, as comic-book publishers, justify bringing such a loaded political question before youngsters and baiting them to accept your position? The comic book paints a greatly distorted picture of violence in America. Also, the fictional assault weapon being portrayed as a weapon of choice by a cop killer could not be farther from the truth. You have portrayed your own views as the truth and are taking advantage of young, impressionable minds!

Violence in our society is caused by warped people and our justice system's inability to take them off the streets for any length of time. Why don't you address the real problem instead of chasing emotional answers that will only deepen our pit of violence?

John D. Joye
Charlotte, NC

Dear Editor,

I just finished reading BATMAN: SEDUCTION OF THE GUN. I am deeply disturbed by your blatant, one-sided position on guns and gun ownership. I am 27 years old, a school teacher, and have been reading Batman, *et al.,* for over 20 years. I have never written to a comic before, but am doing so now.

I realize you folks mean well and I enjoy DC comics (I buy 95% DC, 5% Marvel). But, please don't pander to special interest groups such as those who advocate gun control. Statistics prove that gun control *does not work!* Your facts are skewed and convoluted. Check with the National Center for Health Statistics—they will give you correct data.

My condolences regarding the loss of John Reisenbach. Obviously it was a great loss to America. But, please direct your grief to the savages who senselessly gunned him down and not at me!

D. Loren Fields
Augusta, MN

Dear Editor,

I am writing you this note to express my feelings regarding BATMAN: SEDUCTION OF THE GUN and your in-house AIDS awareness ads. I think that both efforts are great educational tools and I hope that their messages reach the intended audiences. I hope to see more educational material from DC in the future.

Douglass Paul Abramson
Corona, CA

Dear Editor,

First, let me say I'm sorry to hear of John Reisenbach's death, but I have to take exception to the views expressed in BATMAN: SEDUCTION OF THE GUN.

Without getting into a long pro and con debate on the ownership of firearms, let me say that I've been collecting comics for quite a few years now and can't remember ever reading such a one-sided argument for the control (read: ban) of firearms.

If people would put as much work into revamping our criminal justice system to keep violent offenders off the streets as they do trying to ban firearms, our world would be a better place to live.

I'm donating $2.50—the price of this comic book—to the National Rifle Association along with my copy so they can alert all members as to its contents. Needless to say, I don't plan to buy *any* DC products in the future. Yes, I like to "plink" on weekends and thank God for the Second Amendment.

Bill Campbell, Jr.
Annapolis, MD

Dear Editor,

In response to BATMAN: SEDUCTION OF THE GUN—*thank you.* This was the most thought provoking comic I have read this year.

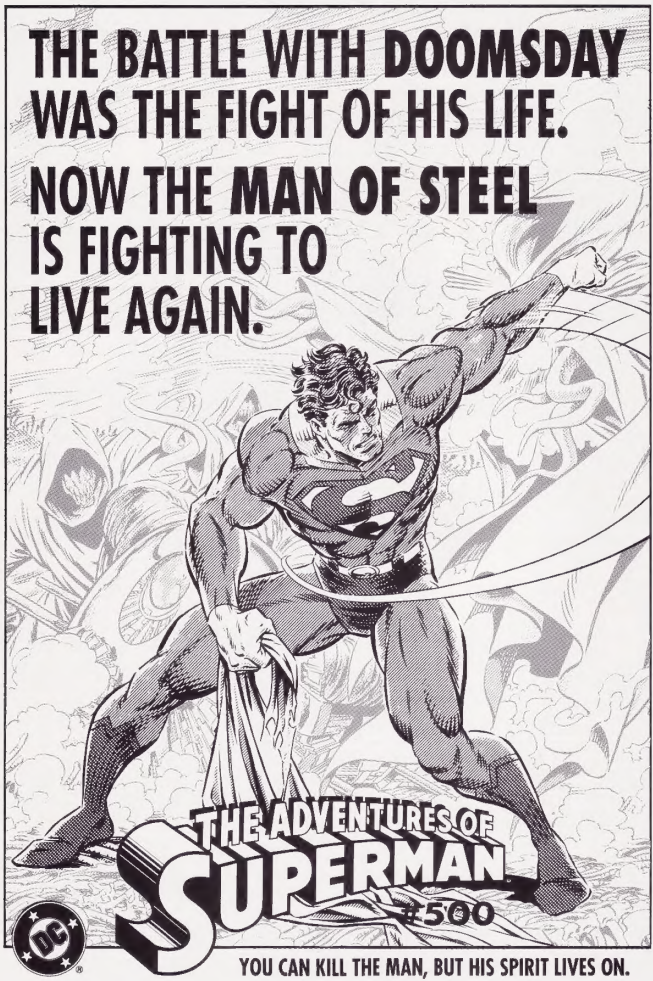
Juice S. Aaron
Starkville, MS

Stay tuned for more letters responding to BATMAN: SEDUCTION OF THE GUN in BATMAN #494, ***Knightfall*** *Part 5, on the stands in just two weeks, one week after DETECTIVE COMICS #660,* ***Knightfall*** *Part 4.*

MTGGLF,
Jordan B. Gorfinkel
—Confused and saddened; eternally hopeful, yet ultimately pessimistic.

NEXT WEEK, IN DETECTIVE, Robin trails Bane's boys and ends up right smack in the middle of a Bane vs. Killer Croc blow-out! It's thrills and scales in DETECTIVE COMICS #660, **Knightfall** Part 4, by Chuck-chuckaroo Dixon, special guest penciller Jim Balent (about whom you will be hearing *a lot* in the very near future) and ace inker Scott Hanna (is there anyone this guy *cannot* ink?!).

IN TWO WEEKS, RIGHT HERE, Robin is drowning in the sewers under Gotham while the Batman hunts Cornelius Stirk for stealing hearts—literally! It's pulse-pounding action in BATMAN #494, **Knightfall** Part 5 by Doug Moench, Jim Aparo and the first of our special "Aparo Inkers" series, Tom Mandrake.


THE BATTLE WITH DOOMSDAY WAS THE FIGHT OF HIS LIFE.
NOW THE MAN OF STEEL IS FIGHTING TO LIVE AGAIN.
THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN
#500
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